

## Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. MR. SONNENFELDT THOUGHT THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE, HEADLINED "THE POLITICS OF APPEASEMENT" BY IRVING KRISTOL ON THE EDITORIAL PAGE OF THE FEB. 12 WALL STREET JOURNAL WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO YOU.

2. WE HAVE, APPARENTLY, DECIDED TO RECTIFY THE TRANSGRESSIONS OF AN IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY BY SUBJECTING OURSELVES TO THE ABUSES OF CONGRESSIONAL GOVERNMENT. THOUGH THE FORMER MAY HAVE BEEN MORE EGREGIOUSLY SCANDALOUS, THE LATTER MIGHT WELL TURN OUT TO BE MORE PERMANENTLY (SIC) DESTRUCTIVE.

3. MOST OF THE PRESIDENTIAL FOLLIES OF THE LAST SIX YEARS HAD LITTLE TO DO WITH THE PRESIDENCY AS SUCH; THEY FLOWED QUITE SIMPLY FROM THE CHARACTER OF MR. NIXON AND HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATES. IN CONTRAST, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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FOLLIES THAT CONGRESS WILL INFLICT ON US HAVE LITTLE TO DO WITH THE PERSONS OF OUR INCUMBENT CONGRESSMEN, WHO ARE PRESUMABLY NO WORSE OR BETTER, ON AVERAGE, THAN EVER BEFORE. THE ABUSES OF CONGRESSIONAL

GOVERNMENT ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO THIS KIND OF GOVERNMENT ITSELF, WHICH IS INEVITABLY IRRESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

4. ONE FORGETS THAT THE REASON THE FOUNDING FATHERS DEVISED A CONSTITUTION WITH A STRONG AND INDEPENDENT PRESIDENT, CONSTITUTING A SEPARATE BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT, WAS BECAUSE THEY HAD, IN THE PREVIOUS DECADE, A MOST GRIEVOUS EXPERIENCE WITH LEGISLATIVE DOMINANCE AT BOTH THE NATIONAL AND STATE LEVELS. THIS LEGISLATIVE DOMINANCE HAD RESULTED IN THE MISMANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AND IMPOTENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. IT ALWAYS DOES HAVE SUCH EFFECTS. CONGRESS, BY ITS VERY NATURE, IS INCAPABLE OF TAKING THE LONGER OR LARGER VIEW OF ANY MATTER. AS THE ULTIMATE ORGAN OF POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY, CONGRESS IS A CREATURE OF POPULAR OPINION, WHICH IT SEEKS TO APPEASE, NEVER TO REFINE OR ELEVATE. THIS INTIMATE ASSOCIATION WITH POPULAR OPINION IS ITS SOURCE OF STRENGTH IN A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS, BUT IT IS A SOURCE OF WEAKNESS WHEN IT COMES TO THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNING. TO TAKE A LONGER OR LARGER OR MORE COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF POLITICAL MATTERS MEANS TO DEFER GRATIFICATIONS, TO IMPOSE TEMPORARY SACRIFICES, TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT WHAT THE NATION NEEDS AS DISTINCT FROM WHAT THE PEOPLE AT ANY MOMENT MAY UNTHINKINGLY DESIRE. NOT WISHING TO DO SUCH THINGS, CONGRESS IS ALLERGIC TO ANY PERSPECTIVE WHICH MIGHT PRESCRIBE THEM.

5. THIS NORMAL CONDITION HAS BEEN MUCH AGGRAVATED, IN RECENT YEARS, BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHAT DAVID STOCKMAN CALLS "THE SOCIAL PORK BARREL." AS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS SPONSORED MORE AND MORE PROGRAMS WHICH DELIVER GOODS AND SERVICES FOR MORE AND MORE PEOPLE, EACH CONGRESSMAN FINDS HIMSELF MORE FIRMLY THE CAPTIVE OF THE PARTICULAR CONSTITUENCY CREATED BY EACH PROGRAM. HIS VOTES, THEN, BECOME A SERIES OF DISCRETE APPEASEMENTS, AND WHAT THEY ADD UP TO HE WILL UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT RECKON. HE REALLY DOES BELIEVE THAT "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY?" IS A LEGITIMATE -- INDEED, THE CRUCIAL-- QUESTION WHICH THE VOTERS MAY PROPERLY PUT TO HIM. AND SINCE HE BELIEVES IT, THE VOTERS NATURALLY BELIEVE IT, TOO.

6. ALONG WITH SUCH IRRESPONSIBILITY IN DOMESTIC (ESPECIALLY FISCAL) AFFAIRS, THERE GOES IMPOTENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY. PRECISELY BECAUSE CONGRESS SEES POLITICS AS THE ART OF APPEASING VARIOUS CONSTITUENCIES, IT CAN NEVER BE SERIOUS ABOUT FOREIGN POLICY, WHICH CONSISTS IN MAKING ONE DIFFICULT AND DISAGREEABLE AND CONTROVERSIAL CHOICE AFTER ANOTHER. THE TRUTH IS THAT

CONGRESS PROFOUNDLY RESENTS FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS, AS RUDE INTRUSIONS IN ITS QUEST FOR THE POPULAR, AND WISHES THEY WOULD GO AWAY. ITS INSTINCT IS TO SUBORDINATE ALL MATTERS OF FOREIGN POLICY TO DOMESTIC (I.E., POLITICAL) CONSIDERATIONS. AND IT JUSTIFIES THIS SUBORDINATION WITH MUCH WISHFUL THINKING AND CLOUDS OF MORALISTIC RHETORIC.

7. THE ATTITUDE OF CONGRESS TOWARD PRESIDENT FORD'S ENERGY PROGRAM IS A CASE IN POINT. IT PERSISTS IN FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE ECONOMIC COSTS OF THIS PROGRAM, ON THE BURDENS IT PLACES ON THIS OR THAT PART OF THE COUNTRY, OR ON THIS OR THAT SECTOR OF THE POPULATION. WHAT IT RESOLUTELY OVERLOOKS IS THAT THIS IS A FOREIGN POLICY PROGRAM, NOT A DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROGRAM AT ALL. IT IS NOT A PROGRAM TO COPE WITH AN OIL SHORTAGE (WHICH DOES NOT NOW EXIST) OR TO COPE WITH HIGH OIL PRICES (WHICH IT WILL NOT REDUCE). IT IS A PROGRAM THAT HAS AS ITS PURPOSE THE PRESERVATION OF AMERICA'S STATUS AS A WORLD POWER, WITH THE CAPABILITY OF CONDUCTING A FOREIGN POLICY FREE FROM BLACKMAIL BY THE OPEC NATIONS, AS WELL AS BY ANY OTHER GROUP OF NATIONS THAT DECIDES TO FORM A CARTEL IN ONE SCARCE COMMODITY OR ANOTHER.

8. I DO NOT SUGGEST THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S PROGRAM IS THE BEST OF ALL CONCEIVABLE PROGRAMS TO ACHIEVE  
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THIS PURPOSE. THERE ARE OTHER WAYS OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS END, AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ONE OR ANOTHER WAY MAY BE SUPERIOR. BUT WHAT IS CERTAIN IS THAT ALL OF THEM WILL BE COSTLY, IN THE SENSE THAT THEY WILL REPRESENT A VOLUNTARY ACT OF ECONOMIC SELF-DENIAL ON THE PART OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN ORDER TO GAIN POLITICAL FREEDOM OF ACTION IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. AND IT IS PREDICTABLE THAT CONGRESS WILL CONCLUDE THAT SUCH ECONOMIC SELF-DENIAL IS UNTHINKABLE. IT WILL NOT IMPOSE RATIONING; IT WILL NOT IMPOSE IMPORT QUOTAS; IT WILL NOT EVEN MOVE TO INCREASE OUR OIL PRODUCTION IN THE OFFSHORE ATLANTIC LEST IT INCONVENIENCE NEW JERSEY'S SUMMER RESORTS. IT WILL DECIDE, RATHER, THAT WE SHALL ALL BE BETTER OFF -- I.E., MORE COMFORTABLE -- WITH NO KIND OF PROGRAM AT ALL.

9. IN NARROW AND SHORT-SIGHTED ECONOMIC TERMS, OF IS NO DOUBT THAT ALL AMERICANS WILL BE MORE COMFORTABLE WITHOUT AN ACT OF SELF-DENIAL THAN WITH IT. NOW THAT THE SHARP INCREASE IN ENERGY COSTS HAS LARGELY

"PASSED THROUGH" THE ECONOMY, AND THE INITIAL PAINFUL

ADJUSTMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE, IT IS EVEN LIKELY THAT IF CONGRESS DOES NOTHING, THE ECONOMY WILL RECOVER ITS NATURAL EQUILIBRIUM AND PROCEED ALONG A PATH OF STEADY (IF MORE MODEST) ECONOMIC GROWTH. SOME ECONOMISTS THINK THIS IS SO -- AND SOME REPUBLICAN POLITICIANS, SEEING THIS POSSIBILITY, EVEN BELIEVE THAT SUCH CONGRESSIONAL INACTION WILL WORK TO PRESIDENT FORD'S ADVANTAGE IN 1976.

10. BUT THIS WHOLE WAY OF THINKING ABOUT THE MATTER IGNORES THE POINT OF AN ENERGY PROGRAM, WHICH IS NOT TO GIVE SOMETHING TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BUT TO TAKE SOMETHING FROM THEM, SO AS TO ALLOW US AND OUR ALLIES TO HAVE A FOREIGN POLICY WE CAN CALL OUR OWN. WITHOUT SOME KIND OF ENERGY PROGRAM, AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST WILL, IN THE EVENT OF A CRISIS AND ANOTHER OIL EMBARGO, OR IN THE EVENT SIMPLY OF ANOTHER SHARP INCREASE IN OIL PRICES, BE LIMITED TO TWO ALTERNATIVES: (A) IMMEDIATE MILITARY INTERVENTION, UNCLASSIFIED

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OR (B) ABRUPT APPEASEMENT. THOUGH THE FORMER PROSPECT HAS OF LATE BEEN SPECULATED ABOUT, IT REMAINS ACADEMIC FOR THE WHILE: AFTER VIETNAM, "INTERVENTION" IS A DIRTY WORD. SO APPEASEMENT WILL BE THE ORDER OF THE DAY. AS A MATTER OF FACT IT IS CLEAR THAT, BY CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS AND INACTIONS, APPEASEMENT IS ALREADY THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

11. IT IS HARDLY AN ACCIDENT THAT CONGRESS' REFUSAL TO DEVISE AN ENERGY PROGRAM COINCIDES WITH AN UPSURGE OF SPEECHES AND ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS ABOUT ISRAEL WHICH REMARKABLY RESEMBLE THOSE ANGLO-FRENCH SPEECHES AND EDITORIALS ABOUT THE SUDETENLAND AND DANZIG IN 1938. THEN, AS NOW, SMALL COUNTRIES WHOSE VERY EXISTENCE WAS THREATENED BY POWERFUL NEIGHBORS WERE URGED TO BE "REASONABLE" -- I.E., TO YIELD TO THE THREAT OF FORCE -- IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE "PEACE IN OUR TIME." THEN, AS NOW, THOSE DOING SUCH PERSUADING PROMISED ULTIMATE SUPPORT -- BUT OPPOSED AN INCREASED MILITARY BUDGET BECAUSE OF THE URGENCY OF "UNMET SOCIAL NEEDS." THEN, AS NOW, SMALLER AND WEAKER ALLIES WERE SOLD DOWN THE RIVER SO AS TO AVOID THE CALAMITY OF WAR. THEN, AS NOW, SUCH APPEASEMENT ONLY MADE WAR MORE PROBABLE, NOT LESS.

12. THOUGH APPEASEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS NOW ONLY BEGINNING TO TAKE SHAPE, IT IS ALREADY IN FULL SWING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. ONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT, AFTER OUR WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM, THERE COULD BE NO

QUESTION OF OUR MORAL OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE THE SOUTH

VIETNAMESE WITH THE MILITARY SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR THEIR SELF-DEFENSE. INSTEAD CONGRESS HAS DECIDED THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAM GOVERNMENT IS NOT "NICE" ENOUGH TO SUIT OUR LIBERAL TASTES, AND THAT WHAT HAPPENS THERE IS IN ANY CASE NOT OF CRITICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS. BUT IF THIS IS TRUE OF SOUTH VIETNAM, WHY IS IT LESS TRUE OF SOUTH KOREA, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, INDONESIA -- OR, IN EUROPE, OF YUGOSLAVIA, PORTUGAL, OR SPAIN? NONE OF THESE GOVERNMENTS IS A LIBERAL DEMOCRACY, IN OUR SENSE OF THE TERM; AND, UNCLASSIFIED

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IN ISOLATION NONE OF THEM IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO US. BUT WERE THEY ALL TO END UP AS MEMBERS OF AN ANTI-AMERICAN BLOC, THE SHAPE OF WORLD POLITICS WOULD BE DECISIVELY ALTERED, AND TO OUR DISADVANTAGE.

"FORTRESS AMERICA" MIGHT THEN BECOME AN UGLY NECESSITY, RATHER THAN A SQUALID FANTASY.

13. IT WILL BE SAID BY SOME THAT I AM BEING BEWITCHED BY A VERSION OF THE "DOMINO THEORY", WHICH EQUATES THE SURRENDER OF AN INCONVENIENTLY SITUATED PAWN OR TWO WITH THE LOSS OF THE ENTIRE CHESS GAME. THE DEPRECIATION OF THE "DOMINO THEORY" IS ALWAYS MUCH FAVORED BY THOSE WHO ARE SET FOR APPEASEMENT. BUT IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, AS IN CHESS, THE "DOMINO THEORY" IS USUALLY MORE RIGHT THAN WRONG. THE RUSSIANS CERTAINLY TAKE THIS THEORY SERIOUSLY; THEY ARE NOT POURING ARMS INTO NORTH VIETNAM OR SYRIA-- OR MONEY INTO THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY -- BECAUSE OF A PRIMITIVE INABILITY TO READ A MAP.

14. AND, ONE WONDERS, WHAT ABOUT SAUDI ARABIA ITSELF? THIS ANTIQUATED AND CREAKING DESPOTISM WILL SURELY, ONE OF THESE DAYS, BE OVERTHROWN BY A REBELLION OF YOUNG ARAB NATIONALISTS, STRONGLY ANTI-WESTERN IN OUTLOOK AND HENCE ANTI-AMERICAN. THE VERY MONEY IT IS NOW EXPENDING FOR ITS OWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GUARANTEES THAT EVENTUALITY. WHAT SHALL WE DO THEN IF WE HAVE NOT DEvised AN ENERGY PROGRAM THAT MAKES US AND OUR ALLIES LESS DEPENDENT ON OPEC OIL? MILITARY ACTION WILL BE EVEN LESS IMAGINABLE IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES THAN IT IS NOW, SINCE MASSIVE SUPPLIES OF RUSSIAN (OR CHINESE) ARMS, ALONG WITH "MILITARY TECHNICIANS," WILL QUICKLY POUR INTO THAT COUNTRY, AND THE THREAT OF A GREAT POWER CONFRONTATION WOULD BE PROXIMATE INDEED. MOREOVER, THE NATO COUNTRIES, HAVING WITNESSED THE TRANQUIL WAY WE HAVE "DISBURDENED"

OURSELVES OF ONE SMALL FRIENDLY NATION AFTER ANOTHER, ARE NOT LIKELY TO HAVE FAITH IN ANY PROPOSAL WE

MIGHT THEN MAKE. THEY WILL CAPITULATE; EUROPE WILL  
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BECOME A SOVIET "SPHERE OF INFLUENCE"; WE SHALL BE  
UTTERLY ISOLATED.

15. A FAR-FETCHED SCENARIO? PERHAPS. BUT THERE IS  
NOTHING FAR-FETCHED IN THE PREDICTION THAT, AS WE  
MOVE DOWN THE WAYS OF APPEASEMENT, THOSE OF OUR ALLIES  
WHO STILL HAVE A POWERFUL YEARNING FOR NATIONAL EXIS-  
TENCE, AND WHO HAVE BEEN RELYING ON "THE AMERICAN  
UMBRELLA," WILL QUICKLY MOVE TO ESTABLISH A NUCLEAR  
"UMBRELLA" OF THEIR OWN. SOUTH KOREA ALREADY HAS  
TAKEN STEPS TO DEVELOP ITS OWN NUCLEAR CAPABILITY.  
TURKEY, AS A RESULT OF ITS EXPERIENCE AT THE HANDS  
OF A MINDLESS AND PETULANT CONGRESS, WILL FOLLOW SUIT.  
PAKISTAN HAS EVERY INTENTION OF RENDERING ITSELF LESS  
VULNERABLE TO A NUCLEAR INDIA BY MAKING ITS OWN NUCLEAR  
BOMBS. AMERICAN APPEASEMENT MEANS NUCLEAR PROLIFERA-  
TION ON A MASSIVE SCALE. AND IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW  
MUCH NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION CAN, IN THE END, MEAN  
ANYTHING BUT NUCLEAR DEVASTATION (OR CONTAMINATION)  
OF A GOOD PART OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE--AND POSSIBLY  
ALL OF IT.

16. THIS IS THE WORLD WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF  
BEQUEATHING TO OUR CHILDREN, AS CONGRESS PECKS AWAY  
AT THE MILITARY BUDGET, INFLATES SPENDING ON SOCIAL  
PROGRAMS, AND SANCTIMONIOUSLY SHEDS ONE "TROUBLESOME"  
ALLY (AS IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER KIND') AFTER ANOTHER.  
TO THOSE OF US WHO HAVE EVEN THE VAGUEST MEMORIES OF  
THE 1930S, IT IS ALL TOO CHILLINGLY REMINISCENT. (END  
TEXT). INGERSOLL

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